

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW HARVEST MOUSE FROM THE SALT MARSHES
OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY, CALIFORNIA.

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For the past forty years Mr. Chase Littlejohn, of Redwood City, has been aware of the existence of a little red-bellied mouse in the salt marshes of San Francisco Bay near his home; but since the mouse was so common and well known to him he supposed that it was one of the well known species. Last fall he showed me a number of alcoholic specimens of this mouse and wished to find out what it was.

The material at hand was unsatisfactory to work with, so we set to work to gather some new material which now consists of some twenty-six study skins and skulls from various representative points around San Francisco Bay. A close study of this material led us to believe that the mouse was an unknown form restricted to the salt marshes of San Francisco Bay. The material was sent to Washington, and a comparison of it with the material in the Biological Survey Collection resulted in the decision that it was a "very good new form," which I hereby describe as:

***Reithrodontomys raviventris* sp. nov.**

Type.—male; number 475, collection of University of California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (original number, 134); Redwood City, San Mateo County, Calif.; collected by Chase Littlejohn; Jan. 15, 1908.

Geographic distribution.—Salt marshes of San Francisco Bay.

Habitat.—Restricted to the salt marsh. During the winter and high tides, they congregate along the old dikes and other high places, but during the summer they scatter out in the Salicornia toward the bay shore. In the salt marsh near Palo Alto, this mouse was found using the runways of *Microtus* extensively.

Color.—Hairs on back extensively tipped with black which gives the dorsal surface a much darker appearance than in *R. longicauda*. Sides of nose brownish black. Lips black. Sometimes a white spot on chin. Feet are of a purple tint during life, and are very much darker, both above and below, than in *R. longicauda*. The toes of the front feet are pure white during life. The tail is very indistinctly bicolored, if at all. There is a decided fulvous spot at the anterior base of the ear, which is a great deal darker than in *R. longicauda*. The underparts are a bright fulvous which contrasts strikingly with the grayish white underparts of *R. longicauda*.

Measurements.—A series of twenty-one *R. raviventris* from Redwood City, average: length, 130.7 (120–142); tail, 64.8 (56–74); hind foot, 16.6 (15–18); ratio of tail to total length, 49.5%. A series of four from Palo Alto, Santa Clara County, Calif., average: length, 130.2 (121–139); tail, 63.5 (58–68); hind foot, 16.7 (16–17). A single specimen from Elmhurst, near Oakland, measures: length, 146; tail, 70; hind foot, 17.

A skull, number 158, ♀, in my collection measures: basal length, 16.2; nasals, 6.9; zygomatic breadth, 9; alveolar length of series of upper molars, 2.9. This skull is possibly a little smaller than the average.

Remarks.—This form is distinguishable from *R. longicauda* which inhabits the foothills surrounding the bay, by its much denser fur, which is darker both at the base and at the tips. The feet are very much darker than in the upland form, as are also the ears. The tail is not distinctly bicolored, as in *R. longicauda*, and the red belly is very noticeable in comparison.